

TIMES AND TRAILS

People, Projects and Priorities at Environment and Conservation

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March 2006

In Vision

Environment and Conservation Employees:

While we continue to be busy with budget and legislative matters, Spring also marks an acceleration of our outreach and education programs. Tennessee will celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the Natural Areas Preservation Act during Tennessee State Natural Areas Week from April 3-9. The Division of Natural Heritage and its partners have developed a unique set of opportunities so citizens can experience the special habitats protected by these natural areas. To see a list of the Natural Area celebration events being held across Tennessee, visit www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/naweek06.pdf.

It was good to see adults and young people choosing to spend their recent Spring Break by working on trail building projects at sites like the Cumberland Trail. Some of the best public health investments made by citizens and their government are the promotion and development of greenways and trails. Whether it's a challenging hike to the new Walls of Jericho State Natural Area in Franklin County or a stroll along the Shelby Bottoms Greenway, these trails offer paths to better health for people of all ages and abilities. This mix of open space conservation and public use is truly a benefit for individuals and families seeking to improve their health.

While every day is Earth Day for our department, Environment and Conservation will have an active role in Earth Day celebrations throughout April. Staff will be participating in a number of Earth Day events and activities across the state – from alternative fuel demonstrations to outdoor classroom explorations in rivers and streams. I will be helping out with Nashville's Earth Day festival at Centennial Park on April 22, and this is just one of many locations where TDEC employees will be promoting ways to safeguard human health by protecting our land, air and water.

Our department will also be continuing its partnership with Tennessee minor league baseball this spring and summer. Staff will be sharing state parks information, distributing Used Oil collection containers and promoting our mobile Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection service throughout the season. With more than two million people attending games at nine different stadiums each year, it is a great opportunity to share the natural wonders found in our state parks and the need for personal responsibility in protecting our shared environment.

I am proud of the various ways our department supports healthy communities in Tennessee through effective outreach and education. I hope many of you will make plans to be involved in the department's efforts to create healthier communities during the weeks ahead.



Commissioner Jim Fyke

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim".

Department Meteorologists Gear Up for Ozone Forecasting Season

The State of Tennessee is fortunate to have two meteorologists, Pam Barkey and Athel Murphy Jr., working in the department's Air Pollution Control Division. Pam and Murphy have multiple duties that include reviewing and running computer models to determine pollutant concentrations in the atmosphere, issuing air quality forecasts and providing support to the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) during emergencies.

With increased emphasis on achieving cleaner air and attainment of all federal air quality health standards in Tennessee, our meteorologists play a key role in building public awareness through their forecasting activities. They produce Particulate Matter (PM2.5) forecasts year round, and ground-level ozone forecasts are issued from March 1 to October 31 for six Tennessee cities plus the Great Smoky Mountains

National Park. These air quality forecasts result from complex models where our meteorologists consider numerous data points and variables. Pam and Murphy must also meet a daily deadline in order to supply Tennessee's air quality forecasts to The Weather Channel, USA Today along with local TV, radio and print outlets.

"We become pretty popular during ozone forecasting season," said Pam Barkey. "Our work can be demanding, but it is also very rewarding to know that your daily forecast enables people – particularly those in sensitive populations – to take action that can protect their personal health."



Department meteorologists Pam Barkey (l) and Athel Murphy (r) review weather patterns and atmospheric conditions before determining the next day's air quality forecasts.

Department Uses SEP to Provide Better Equipment in Field and Move UST Owner Beyond Compliance

Department staff conducted inspections that identified a range of violations involving petroleum underground storage tanks (USTs) at six locations under the same ownership/operation. The department issued orders requiring return to compliance and penalties. The respondent has returned to compliance by correcting each and every one of the violations, paid partial penalties and proposed a Supplemental Environmental Project (SEP) in lieu of the balance of the penalties. The cost of the SEP will be well in excess of the outstanding penalties.

This SEP includes the respondent donating 12 Photo-ionization Detectors (PID) to the department so the field offices can upgrade their capability to investigate soil and area samples where potential releases are suspected. These 12 units will allow placement of two new units in each of our larger field offices so environmental staff will have access to updated equipment.

This SEP also includes the respondent upgrading their leak detection equipment at the companies six locations despite the fact it is not currently required to change its leak detection monitoring system in any manner. The company has proactively decided to improve systems at these facilities prior to any major problems occurring that might require a change. Going beyond compliance should prevent these tank sites from having leak detection issues and lessen the likelihood of leaks into the environment.

Arrival of Spring Brings Reminder of Tornado Awareness

Tornadoes are nature's most violent storms and must always be taken seriously. They come from powerful thunderstorms and appear as rotating, funnel shaped clouds with winds that can reach 300 miles per hour. Tornadoes can form any time of the year, but the primary season runs from March to August. The ability to predict tornadoes is limited. The most important thing to do is take shelter when a tornado is spotted in the area or strongly indicated on radar. While tornadoes are fearsome, the number one cause of deaths due to weather in Tennessee is drowning due to flash flooding or individuals trying to drive across a flowing stream of water.

Air Pollution Control Confronts Illegal Open Burning Through Education and Outreach Efforts

Open burning poses a challenging air quality management problem because citizens do not readily perceive it as contributing to air pollution. Rarely do people associate open burning of paper, plastic, vinyl, asphalt shingles, tires and construction debris with air pollution. This has made it difficult to reduce open burning activities in Tennessee, especially in our rural communities where open burning was once the norm.

The Division of Air Pollution Control (APC) has started an open burning outreach program to change this perception. The current open burning brochures are available on the division's Web page at www.tdec.net/apc. The division has also placed articles regarding illegal open burning and its health hazards in *The Tennessee Conservationist*, the *Tennessee Farm Bureau News* and the *Tennessee Cooperator*.

"Raising public awareness about open burning is key to an effective enforcement strategy," said Tammy Medlen, Air Pollution Control's enforcement coordinator. "Most people want to do the right thing regarding open burning, but they may not be familiar with current regulations and public health concerns."

Several cities have partnered with the division to include open burning brochures in monthly utility bills and property tax bills or shown open burning information on local public access channels. Additionally, several fire departments and building inspectors across the state have started handing out the division's open burning brochures. The division has also agreed to waive cash penalties for violators of Tennessee's open burning regulations in exchange for violators placing advertisements about open burning regulations at their expense in their local paper.

"Local partners are helping us share these important messages about illegal open burning in their communities," said Medlen. "We appreciate our local partners and the support of the State Air Pollution Control Board as we move forward with this outreach campaign."



Tires, asphalt shingles, and piles of plastics produce heavy black smoke at an illegal open burning site in McNairy County.

Steps You Can Take to Reduce Backyard Burning

Dispose of Safely: Have your waste picked up by a licensed waste removal company or take it to a local landfill, transfer station, or a drop-off center. Contact your local environmental or waste management department to find a hauler or landfill.

Precycle: Think before purchasing. Buy recyclable and reusable products rather than those that will need to be thrown out.

Reduce: Avoid disposable items. Buy in bulk or economy size. Buy products that can be reused or refilled. Reduce unwanted mail by instructing companies you do business with to not sell or give away your name and address. Write to Mail Preference Service, c/o Direct Mail Marketing Association, P.O. Box 9008, Farmingdale, New York 11735 or call 212-768-7277 to be removed from national mailing lists.

Reuse: Donate unwanted clothing, furniture, and toys to friends and charities. Give unwanted magazines and books to hospitals and nursing homes. Reuse lumber and other construction supplies.

Recycle: Separate recyclables from your waste and drop them off at a local recycling center.

Compost: Yard clippings, leaves, and food can be easily composted in your backyard.

Mulch: Chip brush and wood to make mulch or decorative landscape material.

Source: EPA

Department Hosts Governor's Land and Water Forum II at Montgomery Bell State Park

Various private non-profit conservation organizations, government agencies and concerned citizens came together during the Governor's Land and Water Forum II on February 22-23 at Montgomery Bell State Park. The event gave participants an opportunity to network and share information regarding diverse conservation issues in Tennessee. This year's format featured breakout discussion groups to evaluate four different land and water conservation topics:

- ◆ The need for comprehensive, strategic conservation planning;
- ◆ The relationship between the quality of our land and our waters;
- ◆ The challenge of fragmented planning and funding related to land conservation; and
- ◆ The importance of effective land management.

As each group identified issues and concerns with the subject matter, they also defined specific challenges associated with each topic. These sessions closed by generating recommendations to improve the condition of Tennessee's land and water. The results from each breakout group were reported back to the entire attendance prior to Governor Bredesen's arrival.

Much like the first forum in 2005, the highlight of the entire meeting was having Governor Bredesen there to communicate directly with attendees. Following the presentation of group discussion reports, the governor engaged the gathering in an open question and answer session. The governor gave each participant an opportunity to pose questions or share concerns regarding land and water conservation in Tennessee. Topics ranged from the announced sale of Bowater Company-owned forestlands on the Cumberland Plateau and the role of the new Heritage Conservation Trust Fund to protecting Tennessee's diverse aquatic habitats. While individuals identified a range of opportunities and threats facing our state, there was a sense of hopefulness that many of Tennessee's treasures could still be protected and conserved for future generations.

The governor noted Tennessee's tradition of stewardship for the natural resources that sustain our quality of life. He encouraged forum participants to "think big" with their ideas and efforts as they work with communities in support of activities that create cleaner water and conserve priority open spaces.

"I am committed to growing the momentum we saw here at this forum," said Commissioner Jim Fyke. "There is no doubt that conservation is a priority for this Administration. I am excited about the positive results we will realize in Tennessee from the kinds of collaborative partnerships that were discussed at this meeting."



David Ray, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy; Carl Silverstein, Executive Director, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy; Mary Johnson, member of the Conservation Commission and Heritage Conservation Trust Fund; Governor Bredesen; Morgan Sommerville, Appalachian Trail Conservancy Land Trust (behind others); Mark Hunt, Southern Appalachian Coordinator, Open Space Institute.



Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan shares an update on the Governor's Interagency Alternative Fuels Working Group

Scenes from the Governor's Land and Water Forum II



Governor Bredesen facilitates discussion on land conservation trends in Tennessee with forum attendees.



Commissioner Jim Fyke shares a quick story as he introduces Governor Bredesen to the forum participants.



State Sen. Doug Jackson talks to State Rep. David Shepherd of Dickson at the forum.



Conservation Commission member Tom Callery reports the major points raised during his morning breakout group.



Friends of Radnor Lake member Ann Tidwell asks a question about the current appraisal process in determining land valuations.

Scenes from the Governor's Land and Water Forum II



Governor Bredesen takes time to speak with the media at the forum as TDEC Communications Director Dana Coleman (right) looks on.



Governor Bredesen asks the audience how they think the new Heritage Conservation Trust Fund is doing.



Heritage Trust Fund Board member Earl Worsham of Knoxville shares an update on recent Board activities.



Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation's Julius Johnson talks about the threats to the farm community from encroaching sprawl and unchecked growth.



Van Buren County resident Stuart Carroll shares examples of out-of-state developers and speculators coming into the Sequatchie Valley.

First-ever Conference on Environmental Sustainability in Tennessee Higher Education is Held at Fisk University

The Tennessee Pollution Prevention Roundtable hosted the first-ever Environmental Sustainability in Tennessee Higher Education Conference on March 8 at Fisk University in Nashville. Over 100 participants represented universities, colleges, various state and federal agencies plus private businesses.

Major topics at the conference included environmental compliance at higher education institutions and identifying ways universities and colleges could go “beyond compliance” in order to serve as models for the community. Attendees discussed examples of higher education success in areas such as waste reduction, recycling, energy management systems and Green Building efforts.

At the conference opening session, Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan recognized higher education as a critical incubator and an important amplifier of environmental stewardship across the state. He noted the department’s support for the Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership and its Green Schools program. Paul also shared Governor Bredesen’s proposal for starting a Tennessee Youth Conservation Corps to promote principles of conservation and environmental management among high school and college age Tennesseans. This program will allow students to participate in research, resource management, construction and educational activities at various Tennessee State Parks and Natural Areas.

Paul closed with thoughts on the central focus of the conference: sustainability. “I like to draw upon the simple but elegant definition of sustainability put forward in *Our Common Future* more than two decades ago: Sustainability is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The steps you take to achieve sustainability at your university or college may appear difficult or hard, but those actions are likely to be imperative if mankind is to afford wellbeing for the majority of the world’s population. We’re not going to find the sole fix through a top down solution. Instead, solutions will be driven by communities whose actions are inspired by gatherings such as this.”



Deputy Commissioner Sloan welcomes attendees during Environmental Sustainability in Tennessee Higher Education Conference at Fisk University. FRONT (l-r): Charles Jobe, Environmental Coordinator, Nashville EFO; Sarah Surak, University of Tennessee Recycling Coordinator; Christina Treglia, State Facilities Recycling Coordinator; Vaughn Cassidy, Environmental Coordinator, Jackson EFO. BACK (l-r): Pete Gregg, ETSU Environmental Health director; Deputy Commissioner Paul Sloan; George Kesterson, State Employee Recycling Program, Environmental Assistance.

April 3-9 is Tennessee State Natural Areas Week

Tennessee will celebrate the 35th Anniversary of the Tennessee Natural Areas Preservation Act this year with Governor Bredesen proclaiming April 3-9, 2006 as Tennessee State Natural Areas Week. Tennessee protects over 105,000 acres of unique natural landscapes and habitats in 69 State Natural Areas located throughout the State. The department’s Division of Natural Heritage has planned a number of events and activities at State Natural Areas throughout the week. You can view these outdoor opportunities at www.tdec.net/nh/natareas/naweek06.pdf. Take a moment to recognize and appreciate Tennessee’s spectacular beauty or make time to be out and among our state’s natural treasures.

A special 35th Anniversary poster was created for this celebration and is free while supplies last at the the Division of Natural Heritage offices in the L&C Tower, 7th floor and TDEC Field Offices.



TDEC Welcomes New Used Oil Coordinator



Paula Larson, Used Oil coordinator

Paula Larson joined Environment and Conservation in February as the department's new Used Oil coordinator. Paula grew up in South Dakota and has a long-standing familiarity with plants, wetland and environmental programs since her father is a Natural Resources Conservationist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. She has a bachelors degree in biology from Dakota Wesleyan University and a masters degree in environmental health policy from the University of Minnesota. "The Recycle Used Oil program is a perfect fit for me, and I am very thankful to be working with so many dedicated people inside and outside the department," said Larson. "I look forward to traveling all over the state this spring and summer promoting the Used Oil Program, visiting Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) sites and seeing more of this great state."

Paula (Smith) Mitchell, who previously served as the Used Oil Coordinator, has moved into the Household Hazardous Waste coordinator position in Solid Waste Assistance.

Used Oil Recycling Races to Motorsports Events in 2006

Monster trucks were jumping and roaring, the smell of rubber was in the air, and there was no better place to reach a target audience of automotive enthusiasts. The department's Used Oil Program was on hand during a recent monster truck show at Memphis' FedEx Forum to educate and assist attendees on recycling their motor oil. "It was a sold out show with 5,000 monster truck fans seeking big trucks and big time thrills," said Paula Larson, Used Oil coordinator. "These types of events are prime opportunities for outreach to our target demographic of do-it-yourselfers (DIYers) – people who change their own motor oil and handle other automotive fluids."



Surveys show 58 percent of arena cross and monster truck fans are likely to have done "do-it-yourself" automotive repairs in the last year. A key objective of the Used Oil Program is to educate people on proper handling and storage of used oil. Tennessee's DIYers generate more than 1 million gallons of used motor oil a year. "Taking oil to collection sites, and not pouring it down the drain or on the ground saves our lakes, rivers, and drinking water," said Larson. "Even if you don't change your own oil, Tennessee drivers can do their part to reduce water pollution by repairing their car's leaks and drips through proper vehicle maintenance."

Throughout this spring and summer, Used Oil Program staff will be hosting educational booths at motorsport events and minor league baseball games across Tennessee as part of a comprehensive outreach effort on automotive fluids recycling.

Whether you like your dirt on a race track or the infield, be looking for the department's Used Oil Program at an event near you.

Click [here](#) for more information on the department's Used Oil Program.



Assistant Commissioner Andy Lyon looks over Used Oil materials at a recent outreach event.



Times and Trails

People, Projects and Priorities

East Tennessee Environmental Conference Calls for Healthy Communities

The fifth East Tennessee Environmental Conference was held March 9-10 at MeadowView Conference and Convention Center in Kingsport. The event had more than 300 participants plus 50 sponsors and exhibitors, making it the largest conference ever. The department's Johnson City and Knoxville Field Office staff partnered with the First Tennessee Development District, local Keep America Beautiful affiliates and East Tennessee State University (ETSU) to plan and host this conference. The partners continued to emphasize topics in three categories: health, economic development and environment.

Conference presentations included a keynote address about Healthy Learning from Connie Givens with the Department of Education. Cam Metcalf, Executive Director of the Kentucky Pollution Prevention Center, discussed the importance of reducing waste at the source. Jon Smith, Director of ETSU's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, shared statistics on the positive relationship between a healthy community and environment with economic development. Larry Bristol, ETSU Paleontology Coordinator for the Gray Fossil Site, shared the worldwide scientific significance of this local archaeological dig while entertaining the crowd with humor. TDOT Chief of Environmental Planning Ed Cole concluded the conference in a joint presentation with TDEC's Scholar-in-Residence Professor Dave Feldman. Ed discussed TDOT's Statewide Environmental Management System project and Statewide Stormwater Management Plan while Dave shared the current status of the Report on Tennessee's Environment.

A number of awards were also recognized. Commissioner Fyke presented the Tennessee Recycling Coalition's 2005 Government Recycler of the Year Award to Mark Houser, Head Golf Professional with Warriors' Path State Park Golf Course. Air Pollution Control Director Barry Stephens also received an "Ozzie" award from the Ozone Action Partnership for his work to help the region improve its air quality.

"I want to congratulate Mark Braswell, Phil Chambers, Jan Compton and all the department staff whose significant contributions made this a successful conference," said Commissioner Fyke. "Every year this event demonstrates a greater level of quality, professionalism and organization. While the bar will be set high for 2007, I'm sure this group can once again achieve the high standards they have established."



A record crowd participates in the 2006 East Tennessee Environmental Conference at the Meadowview in Kingsport.

State Park Golf Course Wins Recycler of the Year Award



Warriors' Path State Park Head Golf Professional Mark Houser accepts Tennessee Recycling Coalition's Government Recycler of the Year Award from Commissioner Jim Fyke at the East Tennessee Environmental Conference.

Warriors' Path State Park Golf Course recently won the 2005 Tennessee Recycling Coalition's Government Recycler of the Year Award. Commissioner Fyke presented the award to Golf Course Manager Mark Houser at the East Tennessee Environmental Conference Awards Ceremony at MeadowView Convention Center.

"We're proud to recognize the Warriors' Path State Park Golf Course for its exceptional recycling program," said Commissioner Fyke. "Mark Houser and the Warriors' Path golf team are setting a positive environmental example and creating enjoyable golf experiences for our park visitors."

The Tennessee Recycling Coalition is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting recycling and waste reduction in Tennessee. Every year the Coalition recognizes outstanding recycling and waste reduction programs in four categories: individual, government, non-profit and business.

The Warriors' Path State Park Golf Course is an 18-hole course located on the shores of Fort Patrick Henry Lake at the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. The course hosts about 35,000 rounds of golf every year.

March Service Anniversaries

5 Years

Daniel Boyd, GWP, Central Office
Joshua Fairchild, Paris Landing State Park
Johnny Hamilton, Nathan Bedford Forrest State Park
Mary Hannah, BOE, Knoxville EFO
Lolita Mayberry, DFS, Central Office
Peter Orwig, GWP, Cookeville EFO
Patrick Slattery, SWM, Central Office
Andrew Taylor, UST, Jackson EFO

10 Years

Meredith Mullen, Cumberland Mountain State Park
Mark Tummons, Recreation Services, Central Office
Keith Wimberley, Old Stone Fort State Park

15 Years

Rex Bracy, Jr., GWP, Central Office
Robin Cooper, BOE, Johnson City EFO
Ronald Duncan, Frozen Head State Park
Ernest Ekwugha, Water Supply, Nashville EFO
Stanford Gibbs, Rock Island State Park
Leland Hares, SWM, Memphis EFO
Teri Hooper, Montgomery Bell State Park
William Smith, GWP, Jackson EFO

20 Years

Phillip Bentley, Water Supply, Central Office
David Haggard, Reelfoot Lake State Park
Shirley Nicholson, ISD, Central Office
Ray Register, DFS, Central Office
Coy Rushing, West Tennessee River Basin Authority
Connie Vogt, Montgomery Bell State Park
John West, BOE, Knoxville EFO
Eddie Wilbanks, BOE, Jackson EFO

25 Years

MC Holland, Water Supply, Central Office
Connie Jones, SWM, Central Office
David Murphy, Pickwick Landing State Park

30 Years

Barry Atnip, SWM, Cookeville EFO
Robert Brooks, BOE, Knoxville EFO
Angela Pitcock, APC, Central Office

35 Years

Jerry Milligan, DFM, Radio Communications
Jackie Waynick, APC, Central Office

TAKE TIME OUT FOR HEALTH

Health Fair at the Bicentennial Capitol Mall State Park

In Observance of Minority Health Month



Wednesday, April 19
 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.
 Bicentennial Mall



In Conjunction with
 Tennessee Department of Health's
 MINORITY HEALTH MONTH



DEPARTMENT OF
 ENVIRONMENT &
 CONSERVATION



Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being,
 and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
 ~World Health Organization, 1948

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Phil Bredesen, Governor
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